



WATER RESOURCE PLANS

Overview

Received by Greg Sandford
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Claire Amstrong 2019
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Background

Water resource plans are a key requirement of the *Commonwealth Basin Plan 2012*.

Between 2016–19, 22 water resource plans will be developed for surface and groundwater regions in the NSW Murray-Darling Basin. The plans will operate for 10 years and will include information from other Basin Plan projects. The complexity of plans will vary depending on the number of water resources in the region and their level of development, as well as the number of environmental assets included.

Water resource plans will include the water sharing arrangements that already exist across the NSW Basin area. In some regions, water sharing rules will be refined as consultation and technical studies show opportunities for better outcomes.

Maps showing the 22 regions to be covered by water resource plans in NSW can be obtained from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority website - www.mdba.gov.au/publications/maps-spatial-data#wrpa-surfacewater

Objectives

Water resource plans are an important part of delivering the objectives of the Basin Plan – balancing economic, social and environmental demands on the Basin's water resources.

Individual water resource plans will define economic, social and environmental objectives that are relevant to that region. This means that reviews of strategies and rules will always consider the needs of the region and water users.

Specific performance indicators will measure whether those objectives were delivered successfully.

Guiding principles

Principles outlined in the Basin Plan, together with principles set by NSW, will guide the development of water resource plans.

Basin Plan principles state:

- There will be no adverse impacts on water available to a water access license holder.
- There will be no net reduction in the protection of planned environmental water.
- The Commonwealth is responsible for funding the gap between existing limits and Sustainable Diversion Limits (SDL) water.
- The water resource plan will meet the requirements set out in the Basin Plan.

Additionally, NSW requires that water resource plans:

1. Balance social, cultural, economic and environment needs of the community and catchments.
2. Are cost neutral for NSW license holders.
3. Minimize change for WSPs within their initial ten year period.